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THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY: 1400-1600*

J. C. T. OATES

I HAD thought of calling this lecture "The History of the University Library at Cambridge down to the Foundation of the Bodleian Library at Oxford," but I feared you might think such a title invidious or even arrogant. You will remember that at Oxford the original library of the university was abandoned in 1490 in favor of Duke Humphrey's library, and that in the middle of the sixteenth century Duke Humphrey's library was utterly despoiled by the Commissioners of Edward VI and its furniture sold, so that nothing remained but an empty room. We have suffered distressing losses at Cambridge also, both then and at a later period, and without the reasons, however misguided, that motivated the English Reformers: but we have never at any period lost our entire library, and we still possess books that have been in our continuous possession for 550 years. And this historical continuity is, of course, a source of legitimate pride to us: yet, viewed in retrospect, I do not know that it has been entirely to our advantage. When Sir Thomas Bodley was faced with that empty room at Oxford, he was compelled by the nature of the case to consider what kind of books his new foundation ought to possess and how they were to be housed, arranged, maintained, and supplemented—to draw up, in fact, a statement of policy. At Cambridge we have never been forced to make an entirely fresh start—and I must confess

that we have never had either a man of Bodley's greatness of mind and breadth of vision. As a result we have in general grown casually rather than deliberately, always retaining something from our past.

Another factor also has shaped our history. Our library has nearly always been in two divisions: one to which readers have had unrestricted access with a minimum of supervision, called in the past the common library, or great library, or outer library; and the other, called in the past the little library, or inner library, or *archivi*, to which there has been limited access or no access at all. Now there are no infallible signs by which a rare book can be recognized at its first publication, and books thought of little account in one century become collectors' items in the next. Hence there has always been a certain movement of books from what we now call the open shelves to what we now call the closed shelves: and similarly there has been constant rearrangement of the open shelves, partly in order to create additional shelf room, partly because successive librarians have too often tried to revise the work of their predecessors in the light of contemporary library science. It is thus impossible to go to any block of books in the library and to find there undisturbed the collections of any particular period: so that investigating the history of the University Library is rather like digging an archeological site where all the strata have been mixed up together. It is not difficult to assign a book to its particular stratum, but

* A lecture presented before the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago at International House, April 11, 1962.

you have to find it first: and you have to assemble a representative sample from each stratum before you can begin to consider, in the light of such documentary evidence as survives, how the library was arranged and what it contained at the period which that stratum represents. One such stratum was laid down during the fifteenth century and another during the sixteenth, and these are the two which I shall try to describe in the light of six surviving catalogs or shelf lists, with some supplementation from the University Accounts and other archives.

ORIGINS OF THE LIBRARY

Though this account begins—or, perhaps I should say, will eventually begin—with the year 1400, the library did not. How and when it began are obscure matters, but it appears that there was a common library of the university by the end of the thirteenth century and that it was in the charge of the university chaplain. His remaining duties were to superintend the university's chapel and its schools or lecture rooms, to guard its vestments, chalices, and crucifix, to celebrate the obits of certain benefactors, and to administer the income from certain trusts. The accounts of his stewardship which he had to submit annually might have told us much, but unfortunately they have not survived; there are, however, hints that part of the income from these trusts was devoted to the library.

This close connection between the university's chapel and its library is paralleled elsewhere. At Oxford the earliest library of the university was kept in the university church. Similarly it is not surprising to find the university's books in the charge of the

person who guarded its sacred vessels and jeweled cross: all were reckoned equally valuable in medieval times and were commonly inventoried together, just as books and plate were equally acceptable as pledges against loans from the charitable chests of the university and colleges. Of the six shelf lists of the University Library which were made during our period the earliest, begun about 1424, is preceded by a register of the vestments and other ornaments belonging to the University Chapel; the second, written in 1473, ends with a descriptive inventory of the university crucifix and its appurtenances and with a certificate that the aforesaid books, together with the crucifix and things belonging to it, have been handed over to John Ottley, who was chaplain at the time; and the last, written in 1582, ends with an inventory of the furniture, portraits, and official objects of the university kept in the rooms adjacent to the library. By this last date the chaplaincy had been recently abolished as a relic of popery, and the chaplain's secular duties had passed to two newly created officials: a librarian, first appointed in 1577, and a lesser functionary called the school-keeper.

The site which the University Library occupied, with successive developments and accretions, down to 1934, is known as the Old Schools, comprising four ranges of two-storied buildings facing north, south, east, and west and inclosing a central courtyard. We shall be concerned successively, and anticlockwise, with the buildings on the west, south, and east, since the north range, though the first to be built, was not absorbed by the library until the eighteenth century. The construction of the western range, which was the

second, is not well documented. It was planned to contain a school of canon law below with a library above, and there is evidence that the work was being actively carried forward in 1420, while a document of 1438 mentions the building as being already in existence. The south range was undertaken in 1457 and completed in 1470. It was built as "a school of philosophy and civil law or a library," and we must suppose that as soon as its upper story had been fitted up, the books were moved into it from the library room on the west side. The east range was begun in 1470 and completed five years later: it also contained a library room on the upper floor.

THE EARLIEST CATALOG

Our earliest catalog shows the Library as it was during its first years in the West Room. The catalog is written in what is called the Old Proctors' Book and lists 122 volumes in nine subject divisions: theology, sixty-nine volumes; moral philosophy, five; natural philosophy, twelve; medicine, five; logic and sophistry, one each; grammar, six; canon law, twenty-three: and there are headings, but no entries, for books of poetry and chronicles. There are no books of civil law; this is curious, for one William Loring left us all his books in that subject in 1415; and not only has his will survived, but one of his manuscripts also—a glossed *Codex*, written about 1300: this manuscript (our oldest surviving possession) and others which may be presumed to have been his are duly listed in our second catalog of 1473. It seems therefore that this first catalog must be incomplete, but this is difficult to reconcile with the fact that, as I shall show, it was certainly added to, after its first writing, over a period of years.

In fulness of description the catalog is exemplary. The contents of each manuscript are set out at length, and the authors are named; each manuscript is identified by the first word of its second folio and the first word of its last folio but one; and the donors of 102 of the volumes are named. Seven successive hands have been distinguished. The first entered seventy-six volumes, the gifts of eighteen donors; the second eight volumes, without naming their donors; the third described seven volumes and named two donors; the fourth one volume and its donor; the fifth one volume also, without donor; the sixth nineteen volumes and seven donors; the seventh ten volumes and three donors. The first scribe entered books which we know were bequeathed in 1424; the sixth signs his name "Westhawe" at the end of his last entry, and is probably to be identified as Thomas Westhaugh, Fellow of Pembroke College in 1432; and the seventh scribe entered books which we know were bequeathed in 1440. The donors named by any one scribe are never named by any of the others; and the catalog does not include books which probably came to us in 1444 and others which certainly came to us in 1452. We can therefore certainly infer that it shows the library first as it was in 1424, or very soon afterward, and then as it grew during the next two decades.

Religion and theology account for more than half the books, and religion, theology, and canon law for three quarters. The collection includes, of course, the Bible, with Nicolaus de Lyra's commentaries upon it, and the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, with his commentators. Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, and Anselm are represented, but less well than Gregory: Isidore and

Bernard are absent. There are two copies of Boethius' *Consolatio*, but none of the popular *De disciplina scholarium* which was attributed to him. There is nothing of Bede, or of the English chroniclers, but something of Grosseteste. The single volume of logic contains both the "Old Logic" and the "New Logic" complete; there is a fair quantity of Aristotle and his commentators, while canon law and its expositors are present in force. The grammarians are Priscian, Hugutio, and Helias; the principal medical writers are Galen, Avicenna, Averroes, and Rhases. There are no books on music, arithmetic, or geometry. Palladius, *De agricultura*, alone represents the useful arts. Lucan lurks among the grammar books; otherwise the authors of ancient Rome are entirely absent, as are the early Christian poets. Obviously, therefore, the collection's coverage is decidedly patchy, even within its own restricted range.

Of the thirty-one benefactors who are named, many are but shadowy figures. The most important of them was Richard Holme, Warden of King's Hall and Prebendary of York, who was employed in affairs of state relative to the Scottish war in 1409-15; he gave sixteen books, of which two survive. John Elmer, who gave nine books, held many high positions in the church and was in some way a personal assistant to William of Wykeham, to whose two foundations of Winchester and New College he also gave books. James Thorp, who gave a *Summa predicatorum*, was a Fellow of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, and a Carmelite friar of Norwich; he wrote a commentary on the Apocalypse, persecuted the Wycliffites, and won for himself by his skill in sophistry the name of "the Ingenious Doctor." Richard Langley be-

queathed books to some twenty individuals and some half-dozen institutions, including four volumes of Nicolaus de Lyra to Cambridge; he was attached in his youth to the family of John of Gaunt, became Bishop of Durham and a cardinal, and assisted at the coronation of Henry VI. Nicholas Upton, who gave a commentary of Ambrose on St. Luke, served as chaplain to the Earl of Shrewsbury in the French wars in 1426-28, supported the canonization of St. Osmund at the Roman Curia in 1452-53, and wrote a treatise on heraldry and knighthood which was printed in 1654, two hundred years after his death. John Holbrook, who gave a volume of Gregory, Eusebius, Jerome, and Augustine, was Master of Peterhouse and a mathematician of some note. Thomas de Castro Bernardi, donor of two books of canon law, was also Master of Peterhouse. In Robert Alne, chantry priest at York Minster, who bequeathed six volumes, we catch for the first time a glimpse of the Renaissance, for one of them was Petrarch's *De remediis*; but he gave a life interest in it to his friend John Ottringham, who had entered Peterhouse the same day as himself; in due course Ottringham passed it on to Cambridge, for it appears in the catalog of 1473. John Croucher was a Fellow of Gonville (later Caius) College and Dean of Chichester: and to him we give the most honor as the donor of our Boethius' *Consolatio*, with the English translation by Chaucer: "There are probably," wrote Henry Bradshaw, with cautious understatement, "very few copies of any of Chaucer's works, of which it can be said that they have remained in the same house since within so few years of his death. . . . The donor [deserves] to have a place in our

recollection as the founder of our English library."

Our next catalog was drawn up in 1473 and so shows the library as it was a year or two after it had been moved into the newly completed south range. The collection then numbered 330 volumes. It was therefore larger than the libraries at Queens' College (which possessed 224 volumes in 1472), St. Catharine's (104 in 1475), and King's (about 175 in 1452); but it was still inferior to those at Peterhouse, which had 380 books in 1418 and 439 in 1481, and at Gonville and Caius College, which still possesses some 350 volumes from its medieval library, though no catalog of it has survived.

THE CATALOG OF 1473

The catalog of 1473 is far less detailed than its predecessor: the titles are brief, and the donors' names are not given, though the first word of the second folio is still quoted in the description of books. No book is described as *liber impressus* and all were presumably manuscript. The catalog lists the books as they stood in seventeen lecterns, eight on the north wall and nine on the south, each projecting at right angles from the wall between each pair of windows so as to give the reader as much light as possible. The largest number of books on any one lectern is twenty-seven and the smallest fourteen. Each lectern was probably about eight feet long and was doubtless double-sided: and there may have been a lower shelf, flat or sloping, on each side as well as the lectern top itself. The books did not, of course, stand upright, but lay flat on their sides and were chained to a rod which ran the whole length of the lectern. Further than this we cannot conjecture: the lec-

terns themselves were destroyed in 1547, and of the nineteen volumes which survive none has kept its original binding, so that all evidence of the method of their chaining has been lost.

The catalog has no subject headings, but the books were still arranged in rough subject divisions. As the reader entered the room he found on his right one lectern of grammar (nineteen volumes), one of medicine (twenty-one volumes), and two of natural and moral philosophy (thirty-seven volumes), with four lecterns of civil and canon law (sixty volumes) opposite them; the other half of the room held religion and theology (193 volumes) in nine lecterns, four on the right and five on the left, and thus accounted for 58 per cent of the whole, a slightly larger proportion than in the first catalog. Among authors included in 1473 but not represented before were Ovid (*Metamorphoses*), Cicero (*Rhetorica*), Claudian, Papias, Isidore, Orosius, Josephus, Lactantius (*De falsa religione*), and Origen (*Homilies*). The Petrarch (*De remediis*), surrendered to Cambridge on his death by John Ottringham, was listed. Among English writers included were Trivet, Lathbury, Dumbleton, Stephen Langton, Repyngdon, and Lyndwode, of whom only the last two lived in the fifteenth century. Indeed, it seems possible that Lyndwode's *Constitutiones provinciales*, completed in 1433, was the most up-to-the-minute book in the library.

All but four of the books listed in the first catalog can be found in the second, so that the total of books added was 212. Of the dozen books of civil law most can doubtless be assigned to William Loring's gift of 1415. Loring was canon of Bangor, Salisbury, Lincoln, and Wimborne, and his benefac-

tions were not confined to Cambridge: he gave to the Charterhouse at Witham in Somerset a Bible which is now in Durham Cathedral, and bequeathed to Merton College, Oxford, all the books listed in an indenture between himself and the college and to his scholars at Oxford his copy of the *Sentences*, his other theological books not otherwise specified, and £100 for the further maintenance of their scholarships. Two other books of civil law were bequeathed to Cambridge in 1446 by William Lyndwode, who had been at Gonville and was once a Fellow of Pembroke: a commentary on the *Codex* and Bartholus on the *New Digest* written on paper; to Oxford he left his *Summa Hostiensis* and "my glossed psalter written in a fair hand." Of John Salle, who bequeathed to Cambridge Durandus' *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* (the standard work on church ritual and its symbolism) we know only that he was once a Fellow of Trinity Hall and probably died in 1455 as vicar of Happisburgh in Norfolk. One other book can be assigned to Geoffrey Champney, Fellow and benefactor of Gonville, who died in 1471.

DONATIONS OF WALTER CROME

These donations still leave some two hundred volumes to be accounted for, and fortunately we can account for nearly half of them. They were given by Walter Crome, a former Fellow of Gonville, who died as Vicar of St. Benet Sherehog in London in 1452. Seven of his books survive in the library, six of them being collections of Augustine, partly in his own hand, which M. R. James describes as "ugly"; and an eighth has been identified, divided between the libraries of Corpus Christi and King's. One of our seven survivors

has an inscription stating that it was given in 1444 and was No. 1 in his donations, *primus liber donatus in ordine*; another states that it was given in 1444 but has no number, though Crome adds that he bought it for 10s. from the Vicar of St. Mary by the Wall in Colchester; a third was given on the Feast of St. Hugh (November 17) in 1444 and was Crome's No. 6; he bought it in 1432 for 26s. 8d. from Master William Lavender, and at one time left it with the Prior of Southwark as a pledge against a book which he had borrowed from him; a fourth volume was also given on the Feast of St. Hugh in 1444 and was Crome's No. 10; and a fifth was given in 1452 on the day after the Feast of St. John the Baptist (June 25) and was No. 93.

Crome, you will observe, leaves little to be desired as a documenter of provenance, and the repose of his soul, for which he asked our prayers, must have been gravely disturbed when on the Feast of St. Hugh in 1862 Henry Bradshaw placed before the Cambridge Antiquarian Society a plausible but quite erroneous speculation concerning his benefaction. Bradshaw is, of course, the patron saint of our library, and to suggest, even across the Atlantic from Cambridge, that he may conceivably have been wrong in any particular may well put a man in danger of twenty-nine or more distinct damnations: but I shall do so nevertheless. Briefly, Bradshaw believed that the south range, which we now know to have been begun in 1457, was completed in 1444; he therefore suggested that our first catalog showed the library as it was before it was ready to receive Crome's books, that the Feast of St. Hugh in 1444 may have been the day of the library's "first public opening,"

and that Crome gave the first of his donations to celebrate the occasion. Bradshaw wrote, of course, before the publication of Willis and Clark's *Architectural History of the University of Cambridge*; he did not know, or did not take into account, the fact that Crome gave books to Gonville also on the Feast of St. Hugh in 1444; and he had not read Crome's will.

This will, as one might expect of so meticulous an annotator, is precise and unambiguous. It is dated August 5, 1452, and states that the testator has already given ninety-three books to the Common Library of the University and seven to Gonville; that these books are listed and described in a vellum notebook; that he has given the university token possession of this benefaction by handing over to it during his lifetime three volumes of commentaries on Aristotle; that the authorized representatives of the college and the university are now to recover the remainder from his executors; and that the books are to be chained in the two libraries concerned and are never to be alienated from them: but he reserves the right to sell any of his books if his necessities demand it, should he survive his present infirmity—which, fortunately for the library, he did not.

QUESTION OF TIPTOFT'S BOOKS

I wish I could say that among the remaining donorless volumes are humanistic titles which proclaim themselves to be from the library of Caxton's "right virtuous and noble earl" John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester. A contemporary said of Tiptoft that he despoiled the libraries of Italy so that he might adorn England with the fairest monuments of literature, and Vespasiano da Bisticci, the Florentine bookseller, tells us that he bought a

great quantity of books at Padua and others at Florence, where he stayed several days while manuscripts were being copied for him. Tiptoft had announced his intention of giving to Oxford certain books from his collection as early as 1460; and on his execution in 1470, Oxford, fearing that his library might be dispersed or otherwise lost to the university, wrote to the Archbishop of York asking his influence and help. A few days later the Archbishop replied that he had been able to secure the library, except that part of it which was in Ireland: and it is inferred that the promised books, or some of them, eventually reached Oxford, since one of Tiptoft's surviving manuscripts has the fifteenth-century ownership inscription of the old Oxford University Library. On what grounds Cambridge entertained similar expectations I cannot say, but the University Accounts for 1470–71 record the expenditure of 9*d*. "for the University's letter to the Archbishop of York concerning the books which the Earl of Worcester gave to the University." It was doubtless an appeal similar to the one which Oxford had sent to the same address, and it may have received the same reply: but no welcome infusion of humanist literature is discernible in our catalog of 1473.

THOMAS SCOT OF ROTHERHAM

The fifteenth century ended spectacularly for the library with the benefactions of Thomas Scot, more often called Rotherham after the place of his birth in Yorkshire. Rotherham entered King's College in 1444, became in the 1460's a trusted friend and servant of Queen Elizabeth Woodville, and held many high offices in both church and state—Keeper of the Privy Seal, more than once special ambassador in

France, and Chancellor of England until deprived of that office by Richard III; Bishop successively of Rochester and Lincoln; Archbishop of York; and Chancellor of Cambridge University. He endowed a college at Rotherham for a provost, three fellows (who were to teach grammar, music, and writing), and six scholar-choristers and bequeathed it 110 volumes on his death in 1500; and he was a benefactor also not only of the Cambridge University Library but of Lincoln College (Oxford) and of Pembroke College (Cambridge) as well. His will has been described as "the most noble and striking will of a mediaeval English bishop in existence"; but all his benefactions to the university were made in his lifetime.

ROTHERHAM'S LIBRARY

His first benefaction was completed by May 13, 1475, when the university passed a statute enrolling his name among its principal benefactors in that "to the honour of God, the increase of study, and the advancement of our university he completed the schools and the new library above, and enriched it with many costly books." The building here referred to was the eastern range, which completed the quadrangle: on its ground floor were certain small university offices on either side of a central gateway; the library ran the whole length of the building above. It stood until 1754, when it was demolished to make way for a new range in a politer style of architecture designed to match the university's new Senate House; the stones were sold, and the arch of the central gateway was bought by Sir John Cotton, who set it up again as the entrance to his stables at Madingley Hall, just outside Cambridge: and there it still stands.

A description of the building as it was a few years before it was demolished has fortunately been preserved by the Cambridge antiquary, William Cole. The gateway, he says, had Rotherham's arms and the arms of the colleges "in several Niches and other Parts," and the shields were painted in their proper heraldic colors. The windows of Rotherham's library, Cole continues, had his device in almost every pane of glass, "being a Buck trippant, in almost every Posture and Attitude you can conceive, being Part of his Arms, together with the white or York Rose, which shows his Affection to his great Patron King Edward the fourth. There has been some old Writing also mixed among them 2 or 3 Times in every window, in curious Letters, whereof some are composed of Serpents and is *Da te Deo* [*Give thyself to God*] . . . there were also many other antient coats in the open Works at the Tops of each Window." All this colored glass, Cole complains, was taken away and replaced by crown glass in 1748, "to the no small Reproach of the University in thus defrauding the pious Benefactors and Founders of their just and grateful Memorials": and unwisely too, he adds, for clear glass "is very injudicious in such Buildings as Churches and other Gothic Edifices; where the Largeness and Number of Windows would occasion too much Light, was it not obfuscated and obscured by the grateful Gloom of painted Glass." (This, I may add, is a point which was overlooked by the architect of our present library.)

ROTHERHAM'S BOOKS

We could wish that Cole had described also the furniture and fittings of Rotherham's library, for these also were destroyed when it was demolished.

There is, moreover, no contemporary list of Rotherham's donations, and when in 1650 a pious under-library-keeper compiled a register of our benefactors and of the books which each gave he assigned to Rotherham all the books—255 in number—which were known not to have been given by someone else, including many which did not enter the library until years after Rotherham's death. Thus our only source of knowledge—and it is a meager one—concerning Rotherham's gifts lies in the University Accounts. These show that in 1474–75 the proctors paid 2*s.* for a box “in which was carried a book given by our lord the Chancellor,” and 12*d.* for its carriage; in 1477–78 scribes were paid 20*d.* for writing indentures between the chancellor and the university concerning the books he had given, and 12*d.* for writing lists of all the books in the Common Library and sending them to him—doubtless as a kind of desiderata list in reverse; in the same year 3*s.* 10*d.* were spent on chaining twenty-five books; in 1478–79 eleven books were chained in the chancellor's library and one in the Common Library at a total cost of 4*s.*; in the following year (1479–80) thirty-eight chains were bought and carriage was paid on twenty-seven books “which our lord the Chancellor gave”; and there are similar entries every year down to the end of the century, including 6*d.* for listing and titling twenty books given by Rotherham in 1483–84 and £2 5*s.* 4*d.* in 1489–90 for twenty dozen pairs of clasps. There are also many entries relating to expenditures on the Common Library and to the gifts or bequests of minor donors: and the principal conclusion which I draw from them is that there is no incentive to good librarianship so powerful as a constant and generous benefactor.

These entries account for some eighty volumes and, since Rotherham also furnished his library with books when it was first built, it is possible that the total of his donations approached the 255 which were mistakenly attributed to him in 1650, so that we can estimate the number of books in both library rooms in 1500 as perhaps six hundred. Three of his gifts certainly survive, for they contain contemporary gift inscriptions written on slips of vellum which were originally affixed to the outside of the upper boards, each under a small piece of transparent horn. William Cole saw them thus in 1759, and the slips have been fortunately preserved through successive rebindings. Two of them are dated 1484, in which year, as we have seen, 6*d.* was paid for listing and titling twenty of the chancellor's books. The books themselves are a fifteenth-century manuscript *Catholicon* and two books printed at Strasbourg in the 1470's: the *Speculum naturale* of Vincent of Beauvais, and the last two parts of the same author's *Speculum historiale*. Rotherham gave the first two parts of this last work to Pembroke College, and since the four parts together contain 3,793 chapters divided into thirty-one books neither library had any reason to feel dissatisfied.

There are also three other manuscripts and thirty-three other printed books which can with fair certainty be attributed to Rotherham. They include the Strasbourg-printed *Speculum doctrinale*, three volumes of Aristotle in Latin printed at Padua in 1472–74, and editions of Strabo and Plutarch from the earliest presses at Rome. The remainder are mostly folios of civil or canon law, of formidable appearance and bulk. Eleven of these volumes, containing eighteen different works, have

"my lord Chawnceler" written in them in a hand of about 1500, and the other fifteen works can all be associated with these eleven volumes in one way or other: and all can be identified in the library's catalog of 1556. Nearly all these books are seriously imperfect. They were used as quarries for endpapers by a binder who flourished—if that is the right word to use of him—about 1700, and it is not uncommon to find a leaf missing from one of them used as a paste-down in another.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LIBRARY

So far I have said nothing about the administration of the library, for the sufficient reason that it had no formal administration worth the name until 1582, when "Articles for the Office of Keeping the Library" were first drawn up. Before that date rules were devised to suit particular circumstances. I am, however, glad to say that as early as 1463 the thought occurred to the authorities that the Keeper of the Library ought to be paid. In that year he was voted 40s. a year from the monies of the School of Canon Law, and the accounts for 1463-64 do indeed record the payment to him of a half-year's stipend: but the entry has been struck out, and no such payments appear in later years, so that we must presume that the library-keeper received his stipend, if at all, direct from those who paid it. The earliest regulation concerning admission to the library is of 1471-72, and was provoked, I fear, by the misbehavior of undergraduates. The framers of this statute, who consumed ninepennyworth of wine in the course of their deliberations, begin by remarking gloomily that it is the common experience of mankind to see rules drawn up with the most helpful intentions perverted to harmful ends; hitherto all

and sundry scholars have been admitted to the Common Library at their own convenience and "as we believed, to their moral and mental advantage"; but this liberty has been abused, to the prejudice of the university, and it is therefore now ordained and decreed that undergraduates shall only enter the library in the company of a graduate and must leave it with him; that no graduate who is not a resident member of the university shall enter it except in the academic dress proper to his degree; and that anyone found guilty of breaking these rules shall be excluded for ever. In 1500 this statute was relaxed in favor of monks studying for a time at the university; but it seems that a specific grace of the university was still required by anyone wishing to avail himself of this relaxation.

I find no mention of the official borrowing of books out of the library until 1487, when a copy of the *Speculum morale* was delivered to the chancellor's servant, John Butler, for him to copy: but this is obviously a special case, involving not only the head of the university but also, in all probability, a book which he had himself given three years before. The next record is of 1513, when there is a memorandum in the Grace Book that Dr. Shorton has been allowed to borrow out of Rotherham's library until the beginning of the next academical year a copy of Chrysostom on the Letters of St. Paul to the Corinthians and that he has deposited with the chaplain against its return a silver goblet with a cover partly gilt: and at the same time Dr. Nase borrowed from the Common Library Alexander on the Metaphysics, leaving as a caution in the hands of the junior procurator 10s. in gold. In 1522 Bishop John Fisher's chaplain wrote to the Master

of St. John's asking if he could arrange for the bishop to borrow a volume of Chrysostom's sermons—"the boke lyeth in the new lybrarye of the Universte (that byshop Rotherham made) and was delyvered at the last beyng of my lorde ther. For he had borrowd yt of the Universte before." And in 1530 Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, borrowed, as may be seen from his receipt preserved in the library of Corpus Christi, the volume of Chrysostom which Dr. Shorton had borrowed seventeen years before.

Otherwise the first quarter of the sixteenth century passed uneventfully, and the entries in the accounts give the impression that the enthusiasm which sustained the library during Rotherham's lifetime had declined with his death. There are a few references to the chaining of books newly given to the university, but more to the work of the plumber, the glazier, the carpenter, and the smith. And there are hints that all was not well: a notice which probably repeated the regulations for admission was fastened to the library door four times between 1510 and 1520; Nicholas Spierinck received 2s. 4d. in 1515-16 for binding a book which had been improperly taken away; and in 1525-26 thieves stole a quantity of lead from the roof.

PATRONAGE OF CUTHBERT TUNSTALL

Worse was to happen during the next fifty years, but before the bad years came there was one heartening event, drily reflected in the accounts for 1528-29 as: "To the Bishop of London's servant when he brought books to the University, 3s. 9d." The bishop was Cuthbert Tunstall, at this time of London but about to be of Durham, the friend and correspondent of Erasmus

and Sir Thomas More: and among the books which he gave were the first Greek texts which the library ever possessed. They filled, if I may say so, a long-felt want; but the public orator put it more elegantly when he wrote in the university's official letter of thanks that Tunstall had brought Athens to Cambridge and had established a Greek colony in a Latin town.

There is no contemporary list of Tunstall's gift, but the score of volumes surviving from it may each be identified by an inscription in his own hand. They include a Quintilian of 1493 annotated by himself, a special copy on vellum, with the errata corrected in manuscript, of his own *De arte supputandi*, the first English book of practical arithmetic, printed in 1512, and the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. Among Greek manuscripts are Tzetzes and Dionysius *De situ orbis*, and among Greek printed books the *editio princeps* of Homer and several folio Aldines. The Homer, the first of five copies which the library was to possess, went astray at some period in our history but was restored to us in 1918 when it was recognized in the Huth collection. Other texts which were probably Tunstall's appear in our catalog of 1556 but not in subsequent catalogs—Plutarch; Herodotus; Thucydides and Xenophon in one volume; Aristophanes, Pindar, and Lucian in one volume also; and the fourth volume of the Aldine Aristotle. Tunstall's copy of the Aldine Greek Grammar of Theodore Gaza has somehow made its way to Shrewsbury School; and two other of his books were lost to us within a dozen years of their reception in a manner which almost does us credit: a manuscript of Polyaeus which Roger Ascham borrowed and never returned

(it is now in the library of Trinity College) and manuscript commentaries on Homer and Hesiod borrowed by Sir John Cheke for sixteen months in 1540 so that he might have them printed: twenty years later the accounts note that the vice-chancellor holds pledges from Cheke against certain books which he had borrowed; by this time Cheke had been dead for four years, and for aught I know the vice-chancellor holds his pledges still.

THE LIBRARY OF THE REFORMATION

It may well be that Ascham and Cheke thought that these books would be safer in their own possession, and we shall see that the man to whom principally the library owed its revival certainly acted on the belief that books were more likely to survive in private than in public hands: and because this was so there was a natural disinclination on the part of individuals to add to institutional collections. A few books which had belonged to suppressed monastic houses had drifted into the library by 1556, but for forty-five years after Tunstall's benefaction there is no record in the accounts of any donation or bequest, or of the chaining of a new book, or of the repair of an old chain. Similarly, the library of King's College received only one bequest between 1528 and 1568: and I will not try to improve the words in which the historian of that library during this period has summed up the reasons for this neglect:

The forty years of the English Reformation were not encouraging to the prosperity or even the existence of libraries. The new eagerness of Reformer and counter-Reformer to purge the bookshelves as well as the souls of the nation deprived catalogues of any permanence; the ejection and re-institution of books followed each change of government policy as

regularly as the ejection and re-institution of clergy. But it was not merely the official purges . . . which destroyed the stability of academic libraries; the voluntary enthusiasm of Protestant zealots, in particular, led to the unauthorized destruction of obnoxious books; but more important perhaps than any other factor, the uncertainty whether the Colleges would not follow the monasteries on the road to dissolution discouraged gifts to the libraries of Oxford and Cambridge, and encouraged the neglect of the books they already possessed. More books probably disappeared from theft or neglect than as a result of the official purges.

This, I think, is certainly true of the University Library. Some record would surely have survived if Cambridge had witnessed the destruction of books on the scale perpetrated at Oxford, where in 1535 the quadrangle of New College was full of the loose leaves of Duns Scotus blowing about, while one Mr. Greenfield gathered them up, to make scarecrows, as he said, "to keep the deer within his wood, thereby to have the better cry with his hounds"; and where in 1550 mathematical books were burnt as conjuring books, and the books removed by Edward VI's commissioners were sold as waste not only to booksellers and binders but also "to glovers to press their gloves, or taylors to make measures." Certainly many books were destroyed at Cambridge in 1557, when individuals as well as the university and the colleges, had to submit inventories of their libraries to the Visitors appointed by Cardinal Pole; but John Mere, an Esquire Bedell of the University, who has left a day-to-day account of what took place, makes no mention of any destruction of books belonging to the university: and a similar journal, by William Bill, of the proceedings of Edward VI's commissioners in 1549 does not mention books at all. The university's decision in 1547

to turn the old Common Library into a lecture room for theology, "since in its present condition it is useless," has indeed been interpreted as proof of an official purge; "a clean sweep was made of the old Common Library," wrote Bradshaw, "The hatred of the old learning seems to have been for a time so intense, that few things having the semblance of antiquity about them were spared." But it seems to me that this decision of 1547 means no more than this: that by that date the room had fallen into decay and its contents eroded. John Caius, writing in 1574, said that while a great part of the library had survived, a great part of it perished *suffurantium vitio*, "because it was pilfered"; and I note that whereas in 1534 it was decided that entry to the library should be by key only, the repair of the lock is a recurrent item in the accounts during the next twenty years. I believe therefore that the greater part of our medieval library vanished not in a succession of partisan purges but meanly and by degrees: because no one cared greatly about it since it had outlived its usefulness; so that some men made off with its books in pity, to preserve them, and others in hatred to destroy them to the greater glory of their God.

If our estimate that the library contained about six hundred volumes in 1500 is correct, then the number lost during the years of trouble must have been upwards of four hundred, for the inventory which was drawn up for Cardinal Pole's commissioners shows that in 1556 the Library had only 175 volumes arranged in the twenty stalls of Rotherham's library. Tunstall's books stood together at the far end of the room on the left. All the books which we recognize as Rotherham's are

listed. There are about a dozen volumes of monastic provenance, and—since it is an ill wind of change that blows nobody any good—four manuscripts from Balliol College, Oxford, including a fine Thucydides in Latin bequeathed to that college by one of the most distinguished of early English collectors, William Gray. There are thus about a hundred volumes of which we can only say that they entered the library between 1473 and 1556: and among them, unrecognized and unrecognizable, must surely be many of Rotherham's. Of these 175 volumes, 141 survive; there are no printed books among them other than Tunstall's and Rotherham's; and of those that have not survived, excluding Tunstall's, only one was certainly, and only three others were probably, printed. But the most curious feature of this catalog, and of the other catalogs written later in the century, is that they do not include nine of the survivors from 1473, including seven of the manuscripts of Walter Crome.

REVIVAL OF THE LIBRARY

The story of the library's revival during the last quarter of the sixteenth century has been told before, and therefore I shall not describe it in any great detail again. The central figure is Andrew Perne, Master of Peterhouse, a sixteenth-century Vicar of Bray, who earned from his contemporaries the nicknames "old Andrew Turncoat," "Andrew Ambo," "old Father Palinode," and "Judas." In February 1574 Perne wrote from Lambeth, where he had been discussing university affairs with Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Robert Horne, Bishop of Winchester, to one of the Esquire Bedells, Matthew Stokes, giving him

certain instructions: he was to send Perne the measurements of all the stalls in Rotherham's library, to empty the furthest stall on the right by distributing its contents among other stalls, and to send lists of the books in each stall: "and I do trust," Perne wrote, "to get of my Lord's grace a store of notable bokes to occupie the foresayde furdest stale and to have all ther names printyd that are in every stale."

Three catalogs of the library written at this time show how these instructions were carried out. The first, written by Matthew Stokes in 1573, precedes Perne's letter and is clearly intended as a report on the state of the library. It lists the books stall by stall, notes that there are thirty empty chains on the left-hand side of the room and twenty-six on the right, and adds: "moste parte of all theis bookes be of velam and parchment but veray sore cut and mangled for the lymned letters and pictures"—a reminder that to the Protestant zealot illuminated initials were an offense even in an inoffensive text. The second catalog is merely a hurried copy of the first; and the third shows the books redistributed so that four stalls are now empty and two others half empty. There are only minor discrepancies between the first list and the third; and they both show substantially the same collection as the catalog of 1556. The last of our three lists, rearranged into subject order, is the source of the catalog printed by Caius in the history of the university which he published in 1574.

It was natural that Perne in his attempt to procure books for the library should turn first to Parker, for his was by far the most impressive name that could have been recruited in support of such an enterprise; and where he

led others might be expected to follow. And other benefactors were indeed quickly found, "by the Archbishop's means and incitement," according to Parker's biographer Strype, by Perne's "zeal and sollicitation," according to a eulogy of Perne which was printed at Cambridge after his death. The discrepancy need not worry us, for the technique of such operations does not change. Parker himself gave a hundred books, of which twenty-five were manuscripts; Sir Nicholas Bacon gave ninety-four; Robert Horne, Bishop of Winchester, fifty; and James Pilkington, Bishop of Durham, twenty; and other donors added their smaller contributions during the next few years. The books which they gave—but I believe that they chiefly gave not books but the money to buy them—were, of course, principally the books which would most of all be needed in a library whose latest printed book was some fifty years old—the most recent works of scholarship from the great printing houses of Basle, Geneva, Antwerp, and Frankfurt: Protestant theology from Parker; the sciences from Bacon; the Fathers from Horne; and history from Pilkington.

These were all useful books necessary in any library worth the name: but we must not suppose that the manuscripts which Parker gave us were not useful also. Since 1568 he had been commissioned by the Queen to gather together the dispersed remnants of the monastic libraries, not in any spirit of disinterested antiquarianism, but because in them might be found, and from them might be published, the historical evidence which justified the constitutional and doctrinal principles of Elizabeth's Anglican church: the descent of that church from the primitive

Saxon church, before the claims of the papacy had been fully developed; the rights of the people to read the Scriptures in their own tongue; the rejection of transubstantiation; and the royal supremacy. Parker's manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels, Aelfric's Homilies, and Gregory's *Pastoral Care* in the translation of Alfred the Great, of Bede and Gildas, and of the twelfth-century English historians are beautiful books in any age; but in 1574 they were also immediately relevant to problems daily agitated in the university.

A catalog written in 1582 enables us to reconstruct the arrangement of the library at that date with precision. On the left as the reader entered was a cupboard in which were locked up Parker's manuscripts and a few others—notably the fifth-century codex of the Gospels and Acts which Theodore Beza had given the year before. Then came the remnants of the medieval library, in two stalls on the left and four on the right. Tunstall's books occupied one side of the fifth stall on the right. Its other side, and the sixth stall, held Bishop Horne's books, and opposite them were those given by Barnes and Pilkington. Bacon's books occupied the seventh and eighth stalls on either side: and at the far end of the room, "to the great delectation of the eye of every man that shall enter into the said library," as Perne reported to Parker, stood Parker's printed books. The books of each donor were uniformly bound, with his initials upon the covers, as far as we can tell from those that survive in their original bindings: and Bacon's books had in addition an armorial bookplate, believed to be the earliest English example, with a gift inscription. The total number of volumes was 451, of which about 300 were printed books.

LIBRARY REGULATIONS

Five years earlier the office of librarian had been established at an annual salary of £10, the first occupant being a Fellow of Peterhouse named William James. He was succeeded in 1581 by a non-graduate, and the authorities seized the opportunity of reducing his salary to £3 6s. 8d., though at the same time granting him certain fees from graduands on admission to their degrees—4d. from Bachelors of Arts, 8d. from Masters of Arts and Bachelors of Law, 12d. from Bachelors of Divinity, and 1s. 4d. from Doctors. In the following year the first regulations governing the library were drawn up: there was to be a triple inventory of its contents, and all manuscripts and "other books of Imagerie with colors," all mathematical and astronomical instruments, and all books of mathematics and history were to be locked up; the librarian was bound by a surety of £200 to preserve safely all books which were not locked up, to give an account of them once a year, and to replace any missing or mutilated, "or elles lose his office and paye the triple valewe"; he was to attend in the library throughout term, except on Sundays and on holidays, from 8 to 10 A.M. and from 1 to 3 P.M.; he was to report to the vice-chancellor within three days all necessary repairs to chains, clasps, or bosses, and he was to close all the books and see that they were in their proper order before he left the building both morning and afternoon; and he was to hold office for three years. Admission to the library was confined to Masters of Arts, Bachelors of Law or Physic, and Doctors, "so that at one tyme there be not above Ten in the sayde Librarie together (Except they be strangers that come onely to see and not to tarrie) and that none of them tarrie at one

booke above an houre at one tyme if enye other shall desire to use the sayde booke"; and no book or instrument was to be allowed out of the library except by special permission of the university.

RESTORATIONS OF ANDREW PERNE

Such then, with certain additions, such as 140 volumes of medicine bequeathed by Thomas Lorkin in 1591 and eighty-seven duplicates from his own shelves given in 1597 by Lord Lumley, was the library whose manuscripts were listed by Thomas James in 1600 in his *Ecloga Oxonio—Cantabrigiensis*. We have seen that the catalog of 1582 lists some 150 manuscripts: how then does it come about that James listed 259, including the surviving manuscripts of Walter Crome, which had appeared in no catalog of the library since 1473? The answer is to be found in the accounts for 1585: "Item for a carte to bring certayne written books from peter howse to the schooles gyven by mr Dr perne to the librarye x*d.*, for twoe yt did helpe to lade and unlade the same viij*d.*, and for one booke brought from London vj*d.*" Mr. Neil Ker has shown that these post-1582 accessions occupy a solid block of numbers in James's list, and that about half of them came from the

library of Norwich Cathedral Priory; he has shown too that in 1567 Perne gave to Parker a manuscript, now in the library of Corpus Christi, which Crome gave to the university in 1444.

The conclusion is inescapable: that before 1556 Perne removed from the library a number of manuscripts which he thought were in danger of disappearing, and restored them, with other books from monastic libraries which had come into his possession, nearly forty years later when he had created a library worthy to receive them back again: and thus it may well be that we own many more of Rotherham's manuscripts than we know. If then there is a Cambridge Bodley, that name must be given to Andrew Perne, the man whom his enemies called Judas; who as vice-chancellor during Cardinal Pole's visitation presided over the macabre rituals by which the bodies of Bucer and Fagius were dug up and burned in the Cambridge Market Place; who seventeen years later persuaded Parker to give us Bucer's works and the works of his fellow Reformers; and who on his death in 1589 bequeathed forty shillings yearly to augment the stipend "of a scholar that shall be appointed for the safe keeping of the books of the University Library . . . the which I would wish always to be done by one that is both honest faithful and learned."

APPENDIX: THE PRINCIPAL PRINTED SOURCES

The most important source, though it may be corrected in detail, is Charles Edward Sayle's *Annals of Cambridge University Library, 1278-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 1916). On the duties of the the university chaplain see Henry Paine Stokes, *The Chaplains and the Chapel of the University of Cambridge (1256-1568)* (Cambridge: Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 1906), Octavo series XLI. On the history of the buildings see Robert Willis and John Wil-

lis Clark, *The Architectural History of the University of Cambridge and of the Colleges of Cambridge and Eton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1886), Vol. III. The catalogs of 1424 and 1473 have been published in Henry Bradshaw's *Collected Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1889), pp. 16-54, *q.v.* pp. 17-18 for my references to Bradshaw. On Tiptoft see Roberto Weiss, "The Private Collector and the Revival of Greek Learning" in *The English Li-*

brary before 1700, ed. Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright (London: Athlone Press, University of London, 1958), pp. 120-21, and the references there cited. On Thomas Rotherham see the *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Oxford University Press), XVII, 301-3, and *Testamenta Eboracensia: A Selection of Wills from the Registry at York* (Durham: The Society, 1836-1902), IV, 138-48. William Cole's description of Rotherham's library has been published by J. W. Clark, "A Description of the East Room of the University Library Cambridge Written by William Cole in 1759," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, X, New Series, IV (1889-1903), 419-26. For the history of King's College Library see W. D. J. Cargill Thompson, "Notes on King's College Library, 1500-1570, in Particular for the Period of the Reformation," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, II (1954-58), 38-54. On the dispersal and destruction of libraries in the sixteenth century see C. E. Wright, "The Dispersal of the Libraries in the Sixteenth Century," in *The English Library before 1700*, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-75. The journals of William Bill and John Mere have been published by John Lamb, *A Collection of Let-*

ters, Statutes, and Other Documents from the Manuscript Library of Corp. Christ. Coll. (London, 1838), pp. 109-20, 184-236. For the quotation from Bradshaw see his *Collected Papers*, *op. cit.*, p. 190, and for the quotation from John Caius see his *Works*, ed. E. S. Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), p. 66 of the "Historiae Cantebrigiensis Academiae Liber Primus" (1574). On Andrew Perne see *Dictionary of National Biography*, XV, 896-97, and on his work for the library see N. R. Ker, "Medieval Manuscripts from Norwich Cathedral Priory," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, I (1949-53), 1-28, J. C. T. Oates and H. L. Pink, "Three Sixteenth-Century Catalogues of the University Library," *ibid.*, pp. 310-40, where are published the catalogues of 1556-67, 1573, and 1573-74 (cf. Caius, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-71), and my own contribution, "The Libraries of Cambridge, 1570-1700," to *The English Library before 1700*, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-15. On Parker's work as a preserver of manuscripts see C. E. Wright, "The Dispersal of the Monastic Libraries and the Beginnings of Anglo-Saxon Studies, Matthew Parker and His Circle: A Preliminary Study," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, I (1949-53), 208-37.